1961 NFL Season

This would be the last year that each NFL team would be on their own for TV coverage. CBS had 11 teams under contract, including the expansion Minnesota Vikings. NBC continued to televise 13 Sundays involving either the Colts and Steelers (the odd week was when NBC had the World Series), and the Browns again had their deal with Carling Beer and the Sports Network (SNI, forerunner to the Hughes Sports Network).

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Week 1

Sunday 9/17:

Browns-Eagles, 1:30, SNI. Ken Coleman, Cliff Lewis

Lions-Packers (Milwaukee), 1:30, CBS. Van Patrick, Bob Reynolds (DET). Ray Scott, Tony Canadeo (GB).

Rams-Colts, 2:00, NBC. Lindsey Nelson, Chuck Thompson. CBS. Bob Kelley, Gil Stratton (LA).

Cardinals-Giants, 2:00, CBS. Jack Drees, Terry Brennan (STL). Chris Schenkel, Johnny Lujack (NY).

Bears-Vikings, 3:30, CBS. Red Grange, George Connor (CHI). Herb Carneal, Clayton Tonnemaker (MIN).

Steelers-Cowboys, 3:30. PIT Regional/CBS: Tom Harmon, Davey O'Brien (PIT/DAL)

Redskins-49ers, 4:30, CBS. Jim Gibbons, Eddie Gallaher (WSH). Bob Fouts, Gordie Soltau (SF).

Notes:

Steelers-Cowboys seen in the Pittsburgh area on a regional four channel network consisting of WIIC 11 (NBC Pittsburgh), WTRF 7 (NBC Wheeling, WV), WJAC 6 (NBC p, ABC s Johnstown) and WFBG 10 (CBS p, ABC s Altoona).

This is how it looks like the NBC telecasts worked out: Using this week as an example, the LA-BAL NBC telecast was seen nationally *except* in NFL markets AND the CBS LA network region. The exception to this would be if teams did not play on Sunday, then the NBC affiliate could carry their games in those markets as well. If the Colts or Steelers (in this case the Steelers) were not on NBC and they were on the road, then an ad-hoc regional network would be permitted to carry the game, either using its own crew or picking up the CBS feed and crew.

I would also believe that NBC and CBS used their own production facilities and cameras, as opposed to pooling their resources.

ANY clarification and further information on these CBS/NBC telecasts for 1960 and 1961 would be truly appreciated.

Week 2

Saturday 9/23:

Bears-Rams, 11:00, WBBM-Chicago. Red Grange, George Connor

Sunday 9/24:

Redskins-Eagles, 1:30, CBS. Jim Gibbons, Eddie Gallaher

Lions-Colts, 2:00, NBC: Lindsey Nelson, Chuck Thompson. CBS: Van Patrick, Bob Reynolds (DET).

Giants-Steelers, 2:00, CBS. Chris Schenkel, Johnny Lujack

Cardinals-Browns, 2:00, CBS. Jack Drees, Terry Brennan (STL). SNI. Ken Coleman, Cliff Lewis.

49ers-Packers, 2:00, CBS. Bob Fouts, Gordie Soltau (SF/LA). Ray Scott, Tony Canadeo (GB/CHI).

Vikings-Cowboys, 2:30, CBS. Herb Carneal, Clayton Tonnemaker (MIN). Tom Harmon, Davey O'Brien (DAL).

Note: NBC affiliates in Chicago and Los Angeles also plugged into NBC's telecast of DET-BAL.

Week 3

Sunday 10/1:

Cardinals-Eagles, 1:30, CBS. Jack Drees, Terry Brennan

Bears-Packers, 2:00, CBS. Red Grange, George Connor (CHI). Ray Scott, Tony Canadeo (GB).

Cowboys-Browns, 2:00. CBS: Tom Harmon, Davey O'Brien (DAL). SNI: Ken Coleman, Cliff Lewis.

Vikings-Colts, 2:00. NBC: Lindsey Nelson, Chuck Thompson. CBS: Herb Carneal, Clayton Tonnemaker (MIN).

Giants-Redskins, 2:00, CBS. Chris Schenkel, Johnny Lujack (NY). Jim Gibbons, Eddie Gallaher (WSH).

49ers-Lions, 2:00, CBS. Bob Fouts, Gordie Soltau (SF). Van Patrick, Bob Reynolds (DET).

Steelers-Rams, 5:30. PIT Regional: Joe Tucker, Red Donley. CBS: Bill Symes, Gil Stratton (LA).

Week 4

Sunday 10/8:

Bears-Lions, 1:30, CBS. Red Grange, George Connor (CHI). Van Patrick, Bob Reynolds (DET).

Steelers-Eagles, 1:30 (TD to approx 4:30), PIT Regional. Joe Tucker, Red Donley

Giants-Cardinals, 2:00, CBS. Chris Schenkel, Johnny Lujack (NY). Jack Drees, Terry Brennan (STL).

Redskins-Browns, 2:00. CBS: Jim Gibbons, Eddie Gallaher (WSH). SNI: Ken Coleman, Cliff Lewis.

Cowboys-Vikings, 2:30, CBS. Tom Harmon, Davey O'Brien (DAL). Herb Carneal, Clayton Tonnemaker (MIN).

Colts-Packers, 3:00. BAL Regional: Chuck Thompson. CBS: Ray Scott, Tony Canadeo (GB).

Rams-49ers, 4:30, CBS. Bob Kelley, Gil Stratton (LA). Bob Fouts, Gordie Soltau (SF).

Notes:

PIT-PHI tape delayed on WIIC-Pittsburgh, WJAC-Johnstown, WTRF-Wheeling, WV (all NBC) following Game 4 of the Yankees-Reds World Series.

BAL-GB televised locally to Baltimore on WBAL 11, an NBC affiliate as well as CBS affiliates WBOC-Salisbury, WHP-Harrisburg PA and WSBA-York PA. WMAR, a CBS affiliate in Baltimore, broadcast Game 4 of the World Series.

No NFL telecast on NBC due to coverage of Game 4 of the World Series.

Week 5

10/15:

Colts-Bears, 2:00. NBC: Lindsey Nelson, Chuck Thompson. CBS: Red Grange, George Connor (CHI).

Packers-Browns, 2:00. CBS: Ray Scott, Tony Canadeo (GB). SNI: Ken Coleman, Cliff Lewis.

Rams-Lions, 2:00, CBS. Bob Kelley, Gil Stratton (LA). Van Patrick, Bob Reynolds (DET).

Eagles-Cardinals, 2:00, CBS. Jack Whitaker, Bosh Pritchard (PHI). Jack Drees, Terry Brennan (STL).

Redskins-Steelers, 2:00, CBS. Jim Gibbons, Eddie Gallaher

49ers-Vikings, 2:30, CBS. Bob Fouts, Gordie Soltau (SF). Herb Carneal, Clayton Tonnemaker (MIN).

Giants-Cowboys, 3:30, CBS. Chris Schenkel, Johnny Lujack (NY). Tom Harmon, Davey O'Brien (DAL).

Week 6

Sunday 10/22:

Browns-Steelers, 2:00. WJW-Cleveland: Ken Coleman, Cliff Lewis. NBC: Lindsey Nelson, Chuck Thompson

Rams-Giants, 2:00, CBS. Bob Kelley, Gil Stratton (LA). Chris Schenkel, Johnny Lujack (NY).

Cardinals-Redskins, 2:00, CBS. Jack Drees, Terry Brennan (STL). Jim Gibbons, Eddie Gallaher (WSH).

49ers-Bears, 2:00, CBS. Bob Fouts, Gordie Soltau (SF). Red Grange, George Connor (CHI).

Colts-Lions, 2:30. BAL Regional/CBS: Van Patrick, Bob Reynolds (BAL/DET).

Packers-Vikings, 2:30, CBS. Ray Scott, Tony Canadeo (GB). Herb Carneal, Clayton Tonnemaker (MIN).

Eagles-Cowboys, 3:30, CBS. Jack Whitaker, Bosh Pritchard (PHI). Tom Harmon, Davey O'Brien (DAL).

Note: BAL-DET carried regionally on WBAL Baltimore, WBOC Salisbury, WHP Harrisburg PA and WSBA York PA.

Week 7

Sunday 10/29:

Bears-Colts, 2:00, CBS. Red Grange, George Connor

Browns-Cardinals, 2:00. SNI: Ken Coleman, Cliff Lewis. CBS: Jack Drees, Terry Brennan (STL).

Cowboys-Giants, 2:00, CBS. Tom Harmon, Davey O'Brien (DAL). Chris Schenkel, Johnny Lujack (NY).

Vikings-Packers (Milwaukee), 2:00, CBS. Herb Carneal, Clayton Tonnemaker (MIN). Ray Scott, Tony Canadeo (GB).

Eagles-Redskins, 2:00, CBS. Jack Whitaker, Bosh Pritchard (PHI). Jim Gibbons, Eddie Gallaher (WSH).

49ers-Steelers, 2:00. NBC: Lindsey Nelson, Chuck Thompson. CBS: Bob Fouts, Gordie Soltau (SF).

Lions-Rams, 4:30, CBS. Van Patrick, Bob Reynolds (DET). Bill Symes, Gil Stratton (LA).

Week 8

Sunday 11/5:

Bears-Eagles, 1:30, CBS. Red Grange, George Connor

Packers-Colts, 2:00. NBC: Lindsey Nelson, Chuck Thompson. CBS: Ray Scott, Tony Canadeo (GB).

Steelers-Browns, 2:00, PIT Regional: Joe Tucker. SNI: Ken Coleman, Cliff Lewis

Redskins-Giants, 2:00, CBS. Jim Gibbons, Eddie Gallaher (WSH). Chris Schenkel, Johnny Lujack (NY).

Cardinals-Cowboys, 3:30, CBS. Jack Drees, Terry Brennan (STL). Tom Harmon, Davey O'Brien (DAL).

Lions-49ers, 4:30, CBS. Van Patrick, Bob Reynolds (DET). Bob Fouts, Gordie Soltau (SF).

Vikings-Rams, 4:30, CBS. Herb Carneal, Clayton Tonnemaker (MIN). Bill Symes, Gil Stratton (LA).

Week 9

Sunday 11/12:

Browns-Redskins, 2:00. SNI: Ken Coleman, Cliff Lewis. CBS: Jim Gibbons, Eddie Gallaher (WSH).

Cowboys-Steelers, 2:00. NBC: Lindsey Nelson, Chuck Thompson. CBS: Tom Harmon, Davey O'Brien (DAL).

Lions-Cardinals, 2:00, CBS. Van Patrick, Bob Reynolds (DET). Jack Drees, Terry Brennan (STL).

Packers-Bears, 2:00, CBS. Ray Scott, Tony Canadeo (GB). Red Grange, George Connor (CHI).

Eagles-Giants, 2:00, CBS. Jack Whitaker, Bosh Pritchard (PHI). Chris Schenkel, Johnny Lujack (NY).

Colts-Vikings, 2:30, BAL Regional/CBS. Herb Carneal, Clayton Tonnemaker (*BAL/MIN)

49ers-Rams, 4:30, CBS. Bob Fouts, Gordie Soltau (SF). Bill Symes, Gil Stratton (LA).

Note: BAL-MIN carried regionally on WBAL Baltimore, WBOC Salisbury, WHP Harrisburg and WSBA York. I have no confirmation on this, but have a hunch that WBAL plugged into the CBS feed as Carneal at the time was an Oriole announcer and was a familiar voice to the Free State viewers.

Week 10

Sunday 11/19:

Rams-Packers, 2:00, CBS. Bob Kelley, Gil Stratton (LA). Ray Scott, Tony Canadeo (GB).

Eagles-Browns, 2:00. CBS: Jack Whitaker, Bosh Pritchard (PHI). SNI: Ken Coleman, Cliff Lewis.

Steelers-Giants, 2:00. NBC: Lindsey Nelson, Chuck Thompson. CBS: Chris Schenkel, Johnny Lujack (NY).

Cardinals-Colts, 2:00, CBS. Jack Drees, Terry Brennan (STL).

Lions-Vikings, 2:30, CBS. Van Patrick, Bob Reynolds (DET). Herb Carneal, Clayton Tonnemaker (MIN).

Redskins-Cowboys, 2:30, CBS. Jim Gibbons, Eddie Gallaher (WSH). Tom Harmon, Davey O'Brien (DAL).

Bears-49ers, 4:30, CBS. Red Grange, George Connor (CHI). Bob Fouts, Gordie Soltau (SF).

Week 11

Thursday 11/23:

Packers-Lions, Noon, CBS. Van Patrick, Ray Scott, Tony Canadeo

Sunday 11/26:

Cowboys-Eagles, 1:30, CBS. Tom Harmon, Davey O'Brien

Colts-Redskins, 2:00. BAL Regional: *Vince Bagli. CBS: Jim Gibbons, Eddie Gallaher (WSH).

Rams-Bears, 2:00, CBS. Bob Kelley, Gil Stratton (LA). Red Grange, George Connor (CHI/GB).

Giants-Browns, 2:00. CBS: Chris Schenkel, Johnny Lujack (NY/DET). SNI: Ken Coleman, Cliff Lewis.

Cardinals-Steelers, 2:00. NBC: Lindsey Nelson, Chuck Thompson. CBS: Jack Drees, Terry Brennan (STL).

Vikings-49ers, 4:30, CBS. Herb Carneal, Clayton Tonnemaker (MIN). Bob Fouts, Gordie Soltau (SF).

Notes:

GB-DET televised nationally on CBS (subject to blackout), with Scott and Patrick sharing pxp duties. Canadeo analyst for full game.

Green Bay, Milwaukee and Detroit NBC affiliates added to NBC's STL-PIT telecast.

Per Frederick, MD and Hagerstown, MD newspapers, WBAL (11 NBC) in Baltimore carried BAL-WSH locally to Maryland viewers. I am guessing Bagli, Sports Director at channel 11 and normally Colts radio commentator in 1961, calling this game and working solo. Also carrying this game were WBOC-Salisbury, MD, WSBA-York, PA and WHP-Harrisburg, PA.

Week 12

Sunday 12/3:

Lions-Bears, 2:00, CBS. Van Patrick, Bob Reynolds (DET). Red Grange, George Connor (CHI).

Giants-Packers (Milwaukee), 2:00, CBS. Chris Schenkel, Johnny Lujack (NY). Ray Scott, Tony Canadeo (GB).

Eagles-Steelers, 2:00. NBC: Lindsey Nelson, Chuck Thompson. CBS: Jack Whitaker, Bosh

Pritchard (PHI).

49ers-Colts, 2:00, CBS. Bob Fouts, Gordie Soltau

Redskins-Cardinals, 2:00, CBS. Jim Gibbons, Eddie Gallaher (WSH). Jack Drees, Terry Brennan (STL).

Browns-Cowboys, 2:30. SNI: Ken Coleman, Cliff Lewis. CBS: Tom Harmon, Davey O'Brien (DAL).

Rams-Vikings, 2:30, CBS. Bob Kelley, Gil Stratton (LA). Herb Carneal, Clayton Tonnemaker (MIN).

Week 13

Saturday 12/9:

Colts-Rams, 4:30, CBS. Bob Kelley, Gil Stratton

Sunday 12/10:

Giants-Eagles, 1:00, CBS. Chris Schenkel, Johnny Lujack (NY). Jim Gibbons, Eddie Gallaher (WSH).

Vikings-Lions, 1:30, CBS. Herb Carneal, Clayton Tonnemaker (MIN). Van Patrick, Bob Reynolds (DET).

Browns-Bears, 2:00. SNI: Ken Coleman, Cliff Lewis. CBS: Red Grange, George Connor (CHI).

Cowboys-Cardinals, 2:00, CBS. Tom Harmon, Davey O'Brien (DAL). Jack Drees, Terry Brennan (STL).

Steelers-Redskins, 2:00, NBC. Lindsey Nelson, Chuck Thompson

Packers-49ers, 4:30, CBS. Ray Scott, Tony Canadeo (GB). Bob Fouts, Gordie Soltau (SF/LA).

Notes: BAL-LA was coast to coast on CBS (subject to blackout)

NY-PHI was also picked up by the WSH network on CBS.

PIT-WSH included Channel 4 in LA.

Week 14

Saturday 12/16:

Colts-49ers, 4:30, CBS. Ray Scott, Gil Stratton (National). Bob Fouts, Gordie Soltau (SF).

Sunday 12/17:

Eagles-Lions, 1:30, CBS. Jack Whitaker, Bosh Pritchard (PHI). Van Patrick, Bob Reynolds (DET).

Browns-Giants, 2:00. SNI: Ken Coleman, Cliff Lewis. CBS: Chris Schenkel, Johnny Lujack (NY).

Cowboys-Redskins, 2:00, CBS. Tom Harmon, Davey O'Brien (DAL). Jim Gibbons, Eddie Gallaher (WSH).

Vikings-Bears, 2:00, CBS. Herb Carneal, Clayton Tonnemaker (MIN). Red Grange, George Connor (CHI).

Steelers-Cardinals, 2:00. NBC: Lindsey Nelson, Chuck Thompson. CBS: Jack Drees, Terry Brennan (STL).

Packers-Rams, 4:30, CBS. Bill Symes, Gil Stratton (LA/SF)

Notes:

BAL-SF national telecast (subject to blackout). CBS provided special audio feed for viewers on the CBS SF network.

PIT-STL included KRON in San Francisco.

GB-LA was a single audio feed for both CBS GB & LA networks, using the Rams TV voices.

Postseason

1961 NFL Championship:

Sunday 12/31: Giants-Packers, 2:00, NBC. Lindsey Nelson, Chris Schenkel (C)

NFL Playoff Bowl in Miami:

Saturday 1/6: Eagles-Lions, 2:00, CBS. Chris Schenkel, Van Patrick, Johnny Lujack

NFL Pro Bowl in Los Angeles:

Sunday 1/14: East-West, 4:00, NBC. Lindsey Nelson, Chuck Thompson (C)

See also

- 1961 AFL Season

NFL: 1946 | 1947 | 1948 | 1949 | 1950 | 1951 | 1952 | 1953 | 1954 | 1955 | 1956 | 1957 | 1958 | 1959 | 1960 | 1961 | 1962 | 1963 | 1964 | 1965 | 1966 | 1967 | 1968 | 1969 | 1970 | 1971 | 1972 | 1973 | 1974 | 1975 | 1976 | 1977 | 1978 | 1979 |

1980 | 1981 | 1982 | 1983 | 1984 | 1985 | 1986 | 1987 | 1988 | 1989 | 1990 | 1991 | 1992 | 1993 | 1994 | 1995 | 1996 | 1997 | 1998 | 1999 | 2000 | 2001 | 2002 | 2003 | 2004 | 2005 | 2006 | 2007 | 2008 | 2009 | 2010 | 2011 | 2012 | 2013 | 2014 | 2015 | 2016 | 2017 | 2018 | 2019 | 2020 | 2021 | 2022 | 2023 | 2024 | 2025

AAFC: 1946 | 1947 | 1948 | 1949

AFL: 1960 | 1961 | 1962 | 1963 | 1964 | 1965 | 1966 | 1967 | 1968 | 1969

Local announcers: Radio | Preseason television (since 1970) | Disgorged regular-season games (1964–1984)

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